

19. A method according to claim 12, wherein the further polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of an immunoglobulin Fc domain having an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:3 and a leucine zipper having an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:6.

20. A method according to claim 16, wherein the further polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of an immunoglobulin Fc domain having an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:3 and a leucine zipper having an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:6.

21. A method according to claim 1, wherein the soluble RANK polypeptide comprises amino acids 34 through 196 of SEQ ID NO:2.

22. A method according to claim 5, wherein the soluble RANK comprises amino acids 34 through 196 of SEQ ID NO:2.

23. A method according to claim 6, wherein the soluble RANK comprises amino acids 34 through 196 of SEQ ID NO:2.

24. A method according to claim 13, wherein the soluble RANK comprises amino acids 34 through 196 of SEQ ID NO:2.

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 10 have been amended as indicated above, and new Claims 13-24 have been added to the application. The specification has been amended to correct two inadvertent errors, and to add two excerpts derived from a prior application that was originally incorporated by reference into the present application.

The specification is amended at page 3, line 31 to delete the words "a nucleotide" in reference to SEQ ID NO:3. The sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:3 is clearly an amino acid sequence, thus it is self-evident that the words "a nucleotide" represent an inadvertent typing error. Accordingly, the deletion of these two words does not constitute the addition of new matter.

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The specification is amended above by the addition of two excerpts taken from patent application 08/966,139 (now U.S. 6,017,729). Inserting these two excerpts into the application does not constitute the addition of new matter because USSN 08/966,139 is incorporated by reference into parent application PCT/US99/10588 (see the specification at page 2, line 35, to page 3, line 1). The first excerpt added herein is found in U.S. 6,027,729 at column 16, lines 14-28, and the second excerpt is found in U.S. 6,027,729, at column 17, line 66 to column 18, line 11, and at column 27, lines 4-13. The excerpts shown above are identical to the text at columns 16-18 of U.S. 6,027,729 except for the actual numbers of the SEQ ID NOS. In U.S. 6,027,729, human and mouse RANK proteins correspond, respectively, to SEQ ID NOS:6 and 14, whereas in the present application, human and mouse RANK proteins correspond, respectively, to SEQ ID NOS:2 and 5. Accordingly, the numbers "6" and "14" in the excerpts added herein were changed to "2" and "5." Since these substitutions ensure that the *same* amino acid sequences are referred to in both documents, they do not constitute the addition of new matter.

The specification is amended at page 4, line 28 to refer to "SEQ ID NO:5" rather than "SEQ ID NO:6." The text surrounding this recitation clearly refers to murine RANK. Taking the specification as a whole into account, it would be readily apparent to one skilled in the art that SEQ ID NO:5, not SEQ ID NO:6, is murine RANK. SEQ ID NO:6, for example, contains only 33 amino acids, thus obviously could not represent a full-length RANK protein (see the specification at page 1, lines 34-35, noting that human RANK has 616 amino acids). Furthermore, the specification at page 1, lines 9-11, refers to two U.S. patent applications that disclose the cloning of RANK and RANKL. One of these is 08/996,139 (now U.S. Patent No.6,017,729), which teaches that murine RANK is a protein having 625 amino acids (see U.S. 6,017,729 at column 26, lines 57-61 and surrounding text). SEQ ID NO:5 in the present application contains 625 amino acids. Moreover, the heading for SEQ ID NO:4 herein, which discloses the same protein as SEQ ID NO:5, identifies the sequence as "muRANK." Thus, this amendment merely corrects a self-evident error and does not constitute the addition of new matter.

Claims 1(a), 7(a) and 10(a) are amended above to refer to "SEQ ID NO:2" rather than "SEQ ID NO:62." The need for this correction is self-evident from the first two lines of these claims, which refer to "an amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO:2;" it would be readily apparent to one skilled in the art that the second part of Claims

1(a), 7(a) and 10(a) are meant to refer back to the same sequence that was recited in the initial part of these claims. Furthermore, the sequence listing discloses only six sequences. Thus, it is self-evident that the reference to "NO:62" is an inadvertent error and that the correct sequence listing is SEQ ID NO:2. Accordingly, these amendments do not constitute the addition of new matter.

Claims 1(b), 7(b) and 10(b) are amended as shown above to substitute "SEQ ID NO:5" for "SEQ ID NO:6." Claims 1(b), 7(b) and 10(b) are meant to refer to murine RANK, which as explained above is SEQ ID NO:5, not SEQ ID NO:6. Thus, these amendments do not constitute the addition of new matter.

Claim 6 is amended to correct the inadvertent misspelling of "Paget's" and to delete an inadvertently included word that one skilled in the art would readily recognize as being superfluous. Thus, these amendments do not constitute the addition of new matter.

New Claim 13 is supported throughout the specification, for example, at page 7, line 13, to page 8, line 7. New Claim 14 is supported throughout the specification, for example, in originally filed Claims 2, 7 and 10; at page 3, lines 3-14; at page 4, lines 20-26; page 4, line 37 to page 5, line 5; and in the two excerpts added above by amendment to the specification. New Claim 15 is supported throughout the specification, for example, in originally filed Claims 3, 8 and 11 and at page 4, lines 26-31. New Claim 16 is supported throughout the specification, for example, in originally filed Claims 4, 9 and 12, and at page 3, line 22 to page 4, line 19. New Claims 17-20 are supported, for example, at page 3, lines 31-32, and at page 4, line 18. New Claims 21-24 are supported in the specification, for example, at page 3, lines 3-8. Thus, these new claims do not constitute the addition of new matter.

If the examiner has any questions about this application, he or she is urged to contact the undersigned at her direct dial telephone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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